

Claims

1. A method of improving or maintaining absorption of vitamin E in a pet animal, the
5 method including the step of feeding the pet an edible composition that promotes or
maintains or improves its lipid absorption capacity.
2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the composition comprises one or more of a
10 pancreatic function-promoter, a liver function-promoter, and an intestinal mucosa
function-promoter.
3. A method according to claim 2 wherein the pancreatic function-promoter comprises
a lipase, a gut pH modifier or a pancreatic extract.
- 15 4. A method according to claim 3 wherein the gut pH modifier includes one or more of
an acidifier, an alkalanizer, a buffer, a prebiotic or a probiotic micro-organism.
5. A method according to any one of claims 2 to 4 wherein the liver function-promoter
20 is selected from taurine, emulsifiers, vitamins, minerals, glutathione and glutathione
promoters, and combinations thereof.
6. A method according to any one of claims 2 to 5 wherein the liver function-promoter
is a nutrient that increases endogenous glutathione after ingestion.
- 25 7. A method according to any one of claims 2 to 6 wherein the intestinal mucosa
function promoter includes a fat transportation aid, agent or carrier.
8. A method according to claim 7 wherein the aid, agent or carrier is selected from
30 whey protein and proteases having the capacity to promote the formation of
lipoproteins.
9. A method according to claim 7 or 8 wherein the intestinal mucosa function-promoter
includes an anti-inflammatory agent, lactoferrin, a prebiotic or a probiotic micro-
35 organism.

10. A method according to claim 9 wherein the anti-inflammatory agent is an omega-3 fatty acid.
- 5 11. A method according to any one of claims 7 to 10 wherein the fat transportation aid, agent or carrier has a fatty acid profile selected to improve intestinal absorption.
12. A method according to claim 11 wherein the fatty acid profile is of a medium chain triglyceride.
- 10 13. A method according to claim 11 or claim 12 wherein the fat transportation aid, agent or carrier comprises whey protein.
14. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the composition is administered as a nutritionally balanced, ready-to-eat meal.
- 15 15. A method according to claim 14 wherein the meal comprises a dried pet food kibble.
16. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 13 wherein the composition is administered as a meal supplement.
- 20 17. A method according to claim 16 wherein the meal supplement is in the form of a treat.
18. A method of maintaining or improving the serum vitamin E level in a pet animal comprising the step of feeding the pet animal an edible composition that promotes or maintains or improves its lipid absorption capacity.
- 25 19. A method according to claim 18 wherein the composition comprises one or more of a pancreatic function-promoter, a liver function-promoter, and an intestinal mucosa function-promoter.
- 30 20. A method according to claim 19 method wherein the pancreatic function-promoter comprises a lipase, a gut pH modifier or a pancreatic extract.

21. A method according to claim 19 or claim 20 wherein the liver function-promoter is selected from taurine, emulsifiers, vitamins, minerals, glutathione and glutathione promoters, and combinations thereof.
- 5 22. A method according to any one of claims 19 to 21 wherein the intestinal mucosa function promoter includes a fat transportation aid, agent or carrier.
23. A method according to any one of claims 19 to 22 wherein the fat transportation aid, agent or carrier has a fatty acid profile selected to improve intestinal absorption.
- 10 24. A method according to any one of claims 18 to 23 wherein the composition is administered as a nutritionally balanced, ready-to-eat meal.
25. A method according to claim 24 wherein the meal comprises a dried pet food kibble.
- 15 26. A method according to claim 24 or claim 25 wherein the meal is administered daily.
27. A composition for use in improving or maintaining absorption of vitamin E in a pet animal including a component selected from the group consisting of pancreatic function promoters, liver function-promoters, intestinal mucosa function promoters and combinations thereof, in an amount effective to promote or maintain or improve the lipid absorption capacity of the said pet.
- 20 28. The composition of claim 27 for use in a method of improving or maintaining absorption of vitamin E in a pet animal, the method comprising administering the composition to the pet as a nutritionally balanced, ready-to-eat meal.
- 25 29. The composition of claim 28 wherein the meal is a wet pet food.
- 30 30. The composition of claim 28 wherein the meal is a dry pet food.
31. The composition of any one of claims 27 to 30 wherein the liver function promoter is lecithin.

32. The composition of claim 31 wherein the lecithin is obtained from a source selected from the group consisting of soya, sunflower oil, wheat germ, egg, avocado and combinations thereof.
- 5 33. A method of improving the appearance of a pet comprises the step of increasing its serum vitamin E level by feeding the pet a diet that contains an agent selected from a fat emulsifier or fat emulsification system, a fat transportation agent, an acidifying agent and combinations thereof.
- 10 34. A method according to claim 33 wherein the fat transportation agent comprises whey protein.

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